FIFTH REPORT

STANDING COMMITTEE ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT (2009-2010)

(FIFTEENTH LOK SABHA)

MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

(DEPARTMENT OF DRINKING WATER SUPPLY)

[Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Forty-First Report of the Standing Committee on Rural Development (Fourteenth Lok Sabha) on Drinking Water Scenario in Rural Areas in the country]

Presented to Lok Sabha on 17 December, 2009
Laid in Rajya Sabha on 17 December, 2009

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

December, 2009/Agrahayana, 1931 (Saka)

5

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LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

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COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT
(2009-2010)

Shrimati Sumitra Mahajan—*Chairperson*

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3.	**Shri A.K. Shah**	—	*Additional Director*

*Conseqent upon the resignation of Shri Ajay Singh Chautala from the membership of Rajya Sabha *w.e.f.* 3rd November, 2009 *vide* Notification No. RS.10/2009-T dated 6 November, 2009.

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Rural Development (2009-2010) having been authorized by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, present the Fifth Report on the action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Forty-first Report of the Standing Committee on Rural Development (2008-09) (Fourteenth Lok Sabha) on Drinking Water Scenario in Rural Areas in the Country of the Department of Drinking Water Supply (Ministry of Rural Development).

2. The Forty-first Report (Fourteenth Lok Sabha) was presented to Lok Sabha on 21 October, 2008. The replies of the Government to all the recommendations contained in the Report were received on 11 June, 2009.

3. The replies of the Government were examined and the Report was considered and adopted by the Committee at their sitting held on 14 December, 2009.

4. An analysis of the action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Forty-First Report of the Committee (Fourteenth Lok Sabha) is given in Appexdix-II.

NEW DELHI;
16 *December*, 2009
25 *Agrahayana*, 1931 *(Saka)*

SUMITRA MAHAJAN,
Chairperson,
Standing Committee on Rural Development.

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CHAPTER I

REPORT

This Report of the Standing Committee on Rural Development (2009-10) deals with the action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in their Forty-first Report (Fourteenth Lok Sabha) on the subject 'Drinking Water Scenario in Rural Areas in the Country' of the Department of Drinking Water Supply (Ministry of Rural Development) which was presented to Lok Sabha on 21 October, 2008.

2. Action taken replies have been received from the Government in respect of all the 33 recommendations which have been categorised as follows:—

(i) Chapter II — Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government:
Para Nos.: 2.10, 2.11, 2.12, 2.20, 2.21, 2.27, 2.29, 3.13, 3.14, 3.16, 4.14, 4.16, 4.22, 4.23, 5.20, 5.21, 5.23, 5.24, 5.25, 5.29, 6.11, 6.12 and 6.13.

(ii) Chapter III — Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of Government's replies:
Para No.: Nil

(iii) Chapter IV — Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee:
Para Nos.: 2.13, 2.28, 3.15, 4.15, 4.17, 4.21, 5.26 and 6.15.

(iv) Chapter V — Recommendations in respect of which final replies of the Government are still awaited:
Para Nos.: 5.19 and 6.14.

3. The Committee trust that utmost importance would be given to the implementation of the recommendations/observations accepted by the Government. In cases, where it is not possible for the Department to implement the recommendations in letter and spirit for any reason, the matter should be reported to the Committee with reasons for non implementation. The Committee further desire that Action Taken Notes on the recommendations/ observations contained in Chapter-I and final action taken replies to the recommendations contained in Chapter-V of this report should be furnished to them at an early date.

4. The Committee will now deal with action taken by the Government on some of these recommendations in the succeeding paragraphs.

A. Expeditious updation of data regarding coverage of habitations with drinking water

Recommendations Serial Nos. 1 & 2
(Para Nos. 2.10 & 2.11)

5. The Committee had recommended as under:—

"Provision of access to clean and safe drinking water is one of the biggest challenges facing the country at present. In this regard, having authentic and reliable data is crucial for planning future strategies for providing people sufficient, safe, accessible and affordable water for domestic and personal use. The Committee in their previous Reports had consistently been recommending to the Department to undertake measures to obtain authentic and reliable data with regard to FC, PC and NC habitations in rural areas of the country. At the same time, the Committee expressed apprehension over the tall claims made by the Department of coverage status of more than 90 per cent over the last few years. While acknowledging the efforts made by the Department in this regard by initiating Habitation Survey in 2003, the Committee had felt that the process of revalidation of results of Habitation Survey by IIPA should not be prolonged, as within the said period the entire scenario of coverage status would undergo transformation

again which would render the entire exercise futile and irrelevant. Further, the Committee in their Twenty-Eighth Report on Demands for Grants had expressed concern in the strongest terms over the discrepancy highlighted between the updated data of CAP 99 and the Habitation Survey 2003 results. However, despite the shortcomings, the Committee appreciate the fact that the Department have managed to have the corrected data of Habitation Survey after the revalidation by IIPA and verification by the Monitoring Division of the Ministry, which has not been put in the public domain. The Committee hope that this data will serve as the basis for future planning and projections by the Department and will be regularly updated by the States so as to give a transparent picture of the real scenario of availability of drinking water in rural areas."

[Recommendation (Para No. 2.10)]

"Further, as informed by the Department, the said baseline data is to be updated on yearly basis by the States through software developed for the purpose by enabling online data entry. The Committee commend the efforts of the Department in this regard and hope that the Centre would provide all kind of assistance to the States to ensure purposeful utilization of the said software. The PHED and Panchayati staff should be familiarized with the system for effective reporting of the situation on the ground. The Committee may be suitably apprised about the performance of the various States regarding the online data entry system."

[Recommendation (Para No. 2.11)]

6. The Department in the action taken replies has stated as under:—

"The Habitation survey was conducted in 2003 and the data was validated through IIPA and hosted on Departmental website in August, 2006. Since then this data has been updated in 2007 and 2008. Presently this data is being realigned and updated for implementation of the revised RWS guidelines."

[Reply to Recommendation 1 (Para No. 2.10)]

"The Department has organized a series of training programmes to familiarise the States with the software. Also, special training programmes have been conducted at the request of the States. The Department has also developed an online feedback section, where queries can be sent directly to the concerned officer of the Department. The status of data entry is also monitored every month. With all these efforts, all States have now started using the online system. A few States still have some problems which are not related to the software. These are:—

1. Jammu and Kashmir, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram and Sikkim are not very regular in data entry due to local network connectivity problems.

2. Andhra Pradesh was not regular in the last five months due to re-organization of the department dealing with rural water supply.

However, corrective action is being taken with these States also, so that their performance becomes better in the coming months."

[Reply to Recommendation (Para No. 2.11)]

7. The Committee are happy to note that with the consistent pursuance of the issue, the Department of Drinking Water Supply has been able to update the data regarding coverage of habitations for drinking water purposes during 2008 and the same is being realigned and further updated for implementation of Revised National Rural Drinking Water Programme Guidelines. The Committee urge that the process of further updation and realignment of data should be spurred up so that it can be used for the new programme which has already commenced from 1st April, 2009.

On the related issue of using the online system of data entry with regard to coverage of habitations by drinking water in different States, the Committee appreciate that with the consistent efforts made by the Department most of the States are using the system. However, some of the States like Jammu and Kashmir, Manipur, Nagaland, Mizoram and Sikkim are not very regular in

data entry due to local network connectivity problems. Besides, Andhra Pradesh is also facing problems for the last five months due to reorganization of the Department dealing with rural water supply. The Committee feel that the problems of Jammu and Kashmir and some of the North Eastern States and Sikkim as stated above may be due to their location in difficult geographical condition. The issue of network connectivity problems need to be taken up with the concerned States as well as the Union Ministry of Information Technology. As regards problems of the State of Andhra Pradesh, the Committee hope that everything would have been settled by now and the State would be regular in data entry. The Committee may be kept apprised about the follow up in this regard.

The Committee in the earlier recommendation had also emphasized on the training of PHED and the Panchayati Raj staff with regard to the online system for effective reporting of the situation on the ground. In the action taken reply, the Department has informed about a series of training programmes to familiarize the States with the software. The Committee would like to the apprised whether the PHED and the staff of Panchayati Raj Institutions have also been provided the requisite training in this regard.

B. Need for mechanism for objective verification of coverage of habitations for drinking water purposes

Recommendation Serial No. 4
(Para No. 2.13)

8. The Committee had recommended as under:—

"xxxxx Besides, the Committee would like to emphasise that merely entering the data online by the States is not adequate, but objective verification of the claimed coverage status is of prime importance. Therefore, the Committee recommend that the Department should evolve a mechanism of objective verification of the data provided by the States at the ground level. The Committee feel that such monitoring and verification procedure would be facilitated as and when the names of the habitations

under different categories from the States are also made available. The Committee recommend to the Department to take concrete action on the lines suggested above to make the Panchayat, District and State authorities more accountable and the data more authentic. The Committee emphasise that water is central to the life of each and every individual and given the magnitude of the problem, a sound knowledge and information with regard to coverage status is extremely pertinent for the sector. Such information in public domain is crucial for the State to evolve any long term policy and planning to improve the delivery system and also help mobilize communities and civil society around water related issues. The Committee would like the Department to consider their recommendations/suggestions with all the seriousness and provide specific response on the issues raised above."

[Recommendation (Para No. 2.13)]

9. The Department in the action taken reply has stated as under:—

"The names and categories of each habitation has now been made available in public domain. Any person can access the habitation data base online and view details of water supply schemes of his/ her village from the main page of the website under "Citizens Corner". A feedback section has also been added to the website for accepting any comment from the public."

[Reply to Recommendation (Para No. 2.13)]

10. The Committee are unhappy to find from the reply that the onus of verifying the actual status of coverage with regard to drinking water resources has been left to the public. The Committee feel that it is the responsibility of the Department to ensure meaningful utilization of crores of rupees being allocated every year to different State Governments for ensuring drinking water supply to the rural masses. It was in this context that the Committee had earlier recommended for objective verification of data provided by the States in this regard. It seems that the Department has not taken the recommendation of the Committee in the right perspective. The

Committee would like concrete action on the recommendation of the Committee to be taken by the Department and the Committee be informed accordingly.

C. Coverage of habitations with less than 100 population on priority basis

Recommendations Serial Nos. 5 & 6
(Para Nos. 2.20 and 2.21)

11. The Committee had recommended as under:—

"As already emphasised by the Committee, water is the lifeblood of a community and hence on section of the population should be deprived of the valuable water resource. The Committee in their previous Demands for Grants Reports had been recommending to the Department to give due importance to habitations having population less than 100 which are not included under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of ARWSP. The Committee have persistently been recommending to the Department to shun their complacency and insensitivity in this regard and take urgent action to cover such habitations with less than 100 population on a priority basis. The Committee are perturbed to note that a total of 46,000 such habitations *i.e.* only 50 per cent have been covered so far, while the rest have not been covered with drinking water facilities. The Committee would like to emphasize to the Department that shifting the responsibility to the State Governments would not fulfil the objective of improving access of all rural households to drinking water facilities as presently the States are not even able to fulfil their targets of coverage of habitations with population of more than 100 persons are 20 households. The Committee are dismayed to learn from the replies of the Department that none of the States have reported coverage of habitations with population less than 100, which itself is a telling reminder to the Union to undertake this huge responsibility as these habitations may be in most difficult and backward areas requiring more financial resources."

[Recommendation (Para No. 2.20)]

"The Committee were further informed by the Department that such habitations are proposed to be covered in the post Bharat Nirman period of Eleventh Plan. The Committee would like to state that in many sparsely populated areas within States, there may be large number of habitations with scattered population and uneven development. This, however, should not deny this segment of the population their basic human right of access to clean and safe drinking water. The Government should undertake all endeavours for full realization of universal access to clean and safe drinking water. The Committee, therefore, strongly recommend to the Department to cover all rural habitations, irrespective of their size, on a priority basis and undertake appropriate exercise *viz.* revision of ARWSP norms and provide 100 percent funds for the same. The Committee would like the Department to devise concrete strategies for the purpose and keep the Committee informed."

[Recommendation (Para No. 2.21)]

12. No Department in the action taken reply has stated as under:—

"The recommendation of the Committee has been implemented now in the revised guidelines. According to paragraph 1 of the revised guidelines, the goal is, "to provide every rural person with adequate water for drinking, cooking and other domestic basic needs on a sustainable basis. This basic requirement should meet certain minimum water quality standards and be readily and conveniently accessible at all times and in all situations."

The restriction of only covering habitations with 100 or more population or 20 households has now been removed. The funds are now to be used to provide potable drinking water to all habitations, irrespective of the size of the habitation."

[Reply to Recommendations (Para Nos. 2.20 and 2.21)]

13. The Committee are glad to note that finally the revised guidelines of National Rural Drinking Water Programme have removed the restriction of covering habitations only with 100 or

more population or 20 households for the purpose of getting benefit under the programme related to drinking water. With the continuous pursuance of the issue, the long pending recommendation of the Committee has been implemented. The Committee feel that this is a welcome step and would go a long way in tackling the problems of water shortage in sparsely populated or inaccessible areas in the country. They now expect that concerted efforts would be made to cover such thinly populated habitations.

D. Needs for covering Not Covered (NC) habitations on priority basis

Recommendations Serial No. 8
(Para No. 2.28)

14. The Committee had recommended as under:—

"Further, an analysis of the achievements *vis-à-vis* the targets during Tenth Plan and Bharat Nirman period indicates that underachievement is much more in the category of Not Covered habitations over the last many years. The Committee feel that these Not Covered habitations may be in the most difficult geographical and backward areas. The Department should, therefore, ask the States to cover these Not Covered habitations in a priority basis and provide necessary support to the States to help them achieve the objective. The Committee would like the Department to give necessary directions to the States in this regard and communicate the same to the Committee."

[Recommendation (Para No. 2.28)]

15. The Department in the action taken reply has stated as under:—

"All States have been specifically asked to target not covered habitations. The status of coverage has been given in reply to Recommendation no. 2.27. Only Rajasthan will not be able to achieve the targets, and will continue the work in 2009-10."

As far as reply to recommendation at S.No. 2.27 is concerned, the Government have states as follows:—

> "The Department of Drinking Water Supply held review meetings with States throughout the year. Also, the poor performing States were reviewed periodically for improving their performance during 2007-08 and 2008-09. As a result, the cumulative performance upto March, 2009 under Bharat Nirman as reported by States so far indicates that 54,430 habitations which were under uncovered category have been covered with potable water supply. In regard to the slipped back habitations as per the reports received from the States so far 354,015 habitations have been covered with potable water supply. This figure also includes some habitations which although belonging to the slipped back category were not included in the original Bharat Nirman target. This explains the reason for covering more number of targets than the target stipulated under slipped back category under Bharat Nirman. The new Guidelines under National Rural Drinking Water program introduced with effect from 1.4.2009 focuses on ensuring sustainability in the drinking Water supply programme through source strengthening as well as systematic improvements for O&M purposes. The action plan outlined in the Guidelines in this regard will lessen the slipping back of covered habitations in the future."

[Reply to Recommendation (Para No. 2.28)]

16. On the recommendation of the Committee regarding the need for giving priority by State Governments to the coverage of not covered habitations, the Department has given a contradictory reply. In the reply given with regard to the concerned recommendation *i.e.* 2.28 the Department has also referred to the reply given to recommendation No. 2.27. The reading of the aforesaid two replies together indicates the said contradictions. On the one hand, it has been stated that only Rajasthan will not be able to achieve the targets and will continue the work in 2009-10, on the other hand, it has been stated that all States have been specifically asked to target not covered habitations. Further

in reply to recommendation No. 2.27 it has been stated that the cumulative performance upto March, 2009 indicates that 54,430 habitations which were under not covered habitations have been covered with potable water supply. In the opinion of the Committee, if all the habitations have been covered, the question of Rajasthan continuing the work in this regard all the states being asked to target the not covered habitations does not arise. The Committee take strong objection to the way the recommendation has been dealt with and contradictory position with regard to not covered habitations indicated. The Department should indicate clearly the data will regard to not covered and partially covered habitations in different States as on date as well as the number of such habitations covered during the last three years so as to have a clear picture of not covered habitations in the country.

E. Identifying under-performing States for checking under spending

Recommendations Serial No. 12
(Para No. 3.15)

17. The Committee had recommended as under:—

"Besides, the Committee would urge that apart from adequate Government funding for the purpose, the Department should place more emphasis on the issue of meaningful and optimal utilisation of resources in order to make significant progress with regard to provision of clean and safe drinking water to rural masses. The utilisation position plan-wise indicates under-utilisation of ARWSP funds during the sixth, Seventh, Eighth and Ninth Plans as well as during the Annual Plans of 1990-91 and 1991-92. Further, the same data indicates underutilization from the State share during the Seventh, Eighth, Ninth and Tenth Plans. Besides, if year-wise performance is analysed, the underutilization of allocation can be seen to be a recurrent feature though the situation seems to have improved to certain extent over the last few years especially with regard to utilization of Central share. The delay in utilization of funds by the States, which results in large unspent balances with the State Governments is a major cause of concern. The Centre

through review meetings and close interaction should identify the under-performing States and suggest remedial measures to redress the problem of underspending. The Committee would like the Department to take all concrete steps to ensure accountability from the States regarding optimal utilization of the resources from both Central as well as State share. The Committee may be apprised of the specific measures taken with regard to the same."

[Recommendation (Para No. 3.15)]

18. The Department in the action taken reply has stated as under:—

"All poor performing States were reviewed on a monthly basis to help them improve performance. As a result, almost all States showed improved spending and physical progress. Only Jharkhand could not improve performance in 2008-09, and Uttarakhand was marginally below full achievement."

[Reply to Recommendation (Para No. 3.15)]

19. Pursuant to the recommendations of the Committee to identify underperforming States and to suggest remedial measures to address the problem of under spending, the Committee have been informed that performance of all poor performing States was reviewed on monthly basis for their improvement and as a result improvement has been discernible both in terms of their spending and also physical progress in different States except Jharkhand and Uttarakhand. On the contrary, the Committee find from the Outcome Budget (2009-2010) of the Department [refer statement at page 25 - of Outcome Budget 2009-10 indicating total State-wise availability of funds *vis-à-vis* expenditure during the year (2008-09)] that a large number of States like Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jammu and Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Orissa, West Bengal and Tamil Nadu etc. still have huge gaps between funds available *vis-à-vis* expenditure reported for drinking water purpose. For instance, in the case of States like Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar against the total availability of funds of Rs. 703.32 crore, Rs. 688.25 crore and Rs. 578.94 crore,

the expenditure reported was as low as Rs. 291.49 crore, Rs. 461.19 crore and Rs. 164.74 crore respectively. Similar was the case with some of the other States also. In respect of Gujarat, Orissa, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal as against the available funds of Rs. 376.06 crore, Rs. 298.68 crore, Rs. 287.82 crore and Rs. 392.56 crore, the expenditure reported was abysmally low to the level of Rs. 145.26 crore, Rs. 125.55 crore, Rs. 145.46 crore and Rs. 152.85 crore respectively.

The Committee are anguished to note the casual way in which the Department has tried to furnish a positive picture of the financial achievement of the States on one of the most important programmes *i.e.* ARWSP whereas the actual position is quite dismal as evident from the data provided in the Outcome Budget 2009-10. The Department owe an explanation for providing misleading information to the Committee in this regard. The Department should take utmost care before furnishing the desired information to the Parliamentary Committee.

F. Special emphasis for remote and inaccessible areas

Recommendation Serial No. 15
(Para No. 4.15)

20. The Committee had recommended as under:—

"xx on the question of under-utilisation of funds by States, the Committee have been informed that sometimes States face difficulty in providing Utilisation Certificates, while at other times there are certain habitations in remote and inaccessible areas in some States. On timely receipt of UCs from States, the Committee have already recommended to make use of the online monitoring system upto the district and Panchayat level in previous part of the Report. However, the Committee feel that the primary challenge before the Department is not mere utilization of funds on paper, but to ensure that the funds are directed to sectors and segments where they are required the most. In view of this, the Department should provide all kinds of technical assistance to the States to redress the situation through constant and regular

interaction with them by holding review meetings, training programmes/workshops for State/District level officials and provide solutions for the specific requirements of States. The Committee suggest to the Department to give special emphasis to habitations which are in remote and inaccessible areas by providing enhanced resources to them so as to universalize the access of this basic service to each and every part of the country."

[Recommendation (Para No. 4.15)]

21. The Department in the action taken reply has stated as under:—

"The Department has been organizing a series of workshops across the country for State and District level officers. Funds are being provided to all States to organize such workshops for panchayat and block level persons. Each State has also been asked to identify a Technical Agency which can assist in matters requiring technical inputs. Each State has also formed a Communication & Capacity Development Unit whose work is human resource development for all stakeholders also. Training has been imparted on diverse subjects like Workshop on Swajaldhara, Community participation, Water quality monitoring and surveillance, Operation and maintenance, Sustainability of Water sources, Capacity building for Anganwadi workers etc."

[Reply to Recommendation (Para Nos. 4.15)]

22. The Committee in the earlier recommendation had emphasized (i) to provide all kinds of technical assistance to the States to redress the problems faced by the various State Governments in furnishing the utilization certificates and (ii) to give special emphasis to habitations which are in remote and inaccessible areas by providing enhanced resources. The Department has addressed the first issue and has chosen not to respond at all to the second issue. The Committee would like the reaction of the Department on this aspect of the recommendation which has not been responded to in the action taken reply.

G. Operation and Maintenance Activities

Recommendation Serial No. 17

(Para No. 4.17)

23. The Committee had recommended as under:—

"Another problem faced by the States in management of water supply schemes relate to O&M costs. As per the current norms, 15 percent of ARWSP funds are to be spent by the State Governments for O&M purposes. As pointed out by the Department, large schemes are commissioned for water supply which later suffer due to the problems in O&M. The Committee would like the Department to keep vigil relating to the feasibility and sustainability of water supply schemes. However, since most of the O&M activities are being undertaken by PRIs who do not have the capacity for the same, the Union Government should provide all technical guidance to the States for the same. The Department may also engage the expertise of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj and insist upon them to work towards capacity building of Panchayats, which is crucial for the maintenance of water supply schemes in rural areas. Besides, monitoring of O&M activities by the State, through some institutional mechanism should also be undertaken. The Committee hold that the Department of Drinking Water Supply being nodal Department must ensure that States do not face difficulties in implementation of water supply schemes. The Centre should not shy way from their responsibility by stating that water is a State subject as providing access to safe drinking water to rural masses is the mandate of the Department of Drinking Water Supply. The Committee, therefore, emphasize that the Union Government should provide all kinds of backing through aid, technology transfer, capacity building and partnership with the States through both formal and informal methods, and pursue with them to treat the issue as a foremost developmental agenda. The Committee may be apprised of the desired action taken for coordination with the States with regard to all the issues discussed above.

[Recommendation (Para No. 4.17)]

24. The Department in the action taken reply has stated as under:—

> "Under Communication and Capacity Development units (CCDU) all States have been requested to impart extensive training to the Panchayati Raj Members as well as VWSC members on operation and maintenance of the water supply schemes. The State Governments are advised to consult and choose the technology options before finalising the water supply schemes for particular village/habitations."

[Reply to Recommendation (Para No. 4.17)]

25. The Committee in the earlier recommendation had dealt in detail with the issue of operation and maintenance of drinking water schemes and emphasized that the Union Government should provide all kinds of backing through formal and informal methods. Even when the guidelines of the restructured programme *i.e.* National Rural Drinking Water Programme being implemented *w.e.f.* 1st April, 2009 addresses the issue of operation and maintenance, comprehensively, the Department has furnished an incomplete and vague reply stating that all States have been requested to impart extensive training to PRIs as well as VWSC members on O&M of the water supply schemes. The Committee are anguished to note the casual approach of the Department while responding to their recommendation. The Committee would like that the action should be taken on all the aspects related to water schemes as raised in their recommendation and they be informed accordingly.

H. Expeditious completion of on-going Drinking Water Schemes under 'Swajaldhara'

Recommendation Serial No. 18.
(Para No. 4.21)

26. The Committee had recommended as under:—

> "The Department had initiated reforms programme and the Swajaldhara Scheme to institutionalize community participation

in the drinking water supply sector. However, there were serious problems identified in the implementation of Swajaldhara, which were regularly highlighted by the Committee in their respective Reports. These problems related to inadequate planning and homework before launching the Scheme, lack of motivation among States/Districts to come forth with projects, lack of demand among communities, problems regarding 10 per cent community contribution etc. Pursuant to the strong recommendations of the Committee in their previous Reports, the Department considered and reviewed the Scheme and decided that from the Eleventh Plan, there will be only one Scheme *viz.* ARWSP which will have an element of community participation but may not insist on community contribution. The Scheme will involve signing Memorandum of Understanding with the States which will entail capacity building programmes for PRIs, empowerment of PRIs to levy user changes for O&M etc. Besides, the new guidelines stipulate that it is upto the States to have community contribution from the 50 per cent funds provided by them, the quantum of which is to be decided by the State. In view of the above discussed scenario, the Committee would like the Department to first and foremost ensure that the ongoing projects under Swajaldhara are completed and are not neglected as the Scheme is sought to be discontinued. The Committee, therefore, strongly recommend that every effort should be taken by the Department to give emphasis on pending/incomplete projects under Swajaldhara in consultation with the State Governments. The Committee feel that in view of the poor financial and physical performance of the Scheme earlier, it becomes imperative for the Department to monitor the ongoing projects of Swajaldhara and ensure their timely achievement. The Department must provide additional funds, if required to incomplete/pending projects under Swajaldhara. The Committee would like to be apprised of the latest position State-wise of projects undertaken and completed under the Swajaldhara Scheme.

[Recommendation (Para No. 4.21)]

27. The Department in the action taken reply has stated as under:—

The number of Schemes completed up to March, 2009 under Swajaldhara is as follows:—

State	Approved	Completed
Andhra Pradesh	3131	2812
Arunachal Pradesh	72	54
Assam	3765	3735
Bihar	4	0
Chhattisgarh	304	278
Gujarat	1426	864
Haryana	113	13
Himachal Pradesh	1865	1204
Jammu and Kashmir	75	25
Jharkhand	339	208
Karnataka	1007	735
Kerala	360	316
Madhya Pradesh	1488	1037
Maharashtra	1590	1265
Mizoram	14	12
Orissa	1432	1200
Punjab	63	34
Rajasthan	1603	699
Tamil Nadu	1623	1622
Tripura	793	497
Uttar Pradesh	1361	542
Uttarakhand	204	187
West Bengal	104	42

In so far as the incomplete schemes are concerned, the States can utilize funds for completing the same from the funds allocated under National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP) for the year 2009-10 *w.e.f.* 1.4.2009 and onwards.

[Reply to Recommendation (Para No. 4.21)]

28. The Committee find from the data that out of 22,736 approved projects, 17,381 projects were completed by March, 2009 which means that 5,355 projects are still ongoing under Swajaldhara, a community contribution based drinking water programme which has now been discontinued. Even when the Committee in the earlier recommendation had strongly emphasized the need to pay social attention to the pending/incomplete projects under Swajaldhara, the action taken reply indicates the insensitivity of the Department towards the projects for which crores of rupees have already been sanctioned. The Department has tried to shift the responsibility of completion of ongoing projects to the State Governments by stating that they can utilize funds from allocation made under National Rural Drinking Water Programme. While expressing unhappiness over the way the Department has responded to the issue, the Committee would like to reiterate their earlier recommendation that the Department should monitor the ongoing projects of Swajaldhara even if some additional funds have to be provided for the same.

I. Updating software of online monitoring for addressing the problem of slippages of habitations for drinking water purposes.

Recommendation Serial No. 21
(Para No. 5.19)

29. The Committee had recommended as under:—

"The Standing Committee in their earlier Reports had considered the issue of slippages with utmost seriousness and made series of recommendations to arrest the problem of slippages. The Committee in their Reports on Demands for Grants 2007-2008 and

2008-2009 had expressed strong displeasure over the factual position with regard to coverage status as revealed by the Habitation Survey results indicating huge incidences of slippages negating all progress made in the drinking water sector. The Committee, however, appreciated the efforts of the Department made with regard to the online data entry system where States furnish the data online on an annual basis. Such a measure, the Committee feel would substantially help the Department to have a clear picture regarding coverage status. The Department should continue efforts in this regard through regularly imparting training to officials so that the discrepancies and anomalies in the Survey Results are never repeated in future. Further, the Committee would also like the Department to make provision for entry of State-specific reasons for slippages so that timely corrective measures may be taken through technical and financial support from the Centre. Besides, strict monitoring and verification of the data is imperative for more transparency and reliability. The Committee may be apprised of the performance of the online system and suggestions, if any, for improvement of the software, as already pointed out in the earlier part of the Report."

[Recommendation (Para No. 5.19)]

30. The Department in the action taken reply has stated as under:—

"Provision for entering state specific reasons for slippage is being developed in the online system. The online system has been accepted by all States and their suggestions have also been incorporated. The software is now being modified to capture the Census population that has been covered with drinking water supply schemes."

[Reply to Recommendation (Para No. 5.19)]

31. The Committee are happy to note that the Department has agreed to their recommendation for making provision for entry of State specific reasons for slippages in the online system which has been accepted by all States and the software is being modified. The

Committee would like that the software should be modified expeditiously as it would help the Government to a great extent in finding the State specific problems instantly and taking corrective action accordingly. The Committee may also be apprised of the performance of the online system.

J. Incentive mechanism for sustainability

Recommendation Serial No. 27

(Para No. 5.26)

32. The Committee had recommended as under:—

"Another very important issue which surfaced during examination of the subject related to conjunctive use of water. The Secretary during evidence stated that they are encouraging States and PRIs to revive traditional sources. The Committee would like to suggest to the Department to convince the Planning Commission to provide more funds to the States for the purpose. Further, as communicated by the Department, some mechanism may be evolved for providing incentives to the villages, for taking up sustainability measures. The Committee would like to suggest to the Department that incentive mechanism on the lines of NGP for rewarding villages, which are promoting sanitation practices must be evolved for water conservation, management, rainwater harvesting, revival of traditional sources and other sustainability measures. In this regard, related schemes of other Departments/ Ministries must be coordinated and consultations with all Ministries held so that the modalities and components of the incentive mechanism are expeditiously evolved. The Committee feel that such practical policy initiatives would help achieve sustained progress in the field of providing drinking water. The Department should update the Committee on the efforts undertaken by them on all the aforesaid aspects."

[Recommendation Serial No. 27 (Para No. 5.26)]

33. The Department in the action taken reply has stated as under:—

"After the deliberations with all concerned Ministries including the Planning Commission and approval of the Cabinet, the funds

for sustainability of drinking water sources have been increased from 5% (on 75:25 Centre to State share) to 20% on 100% GOI assistance. Therefore, the Central fund provided to the States the building in sustainability component has been sustainability component has been substantially increased."

[Reply Recommendation (Para No. 5.26)]

34. The Committee recommended that an incentive mechanism should be evolved on the lines of Nirmal Gram Puraskar being awarded to villages for promoting the sanitation practices. However, they are perturbed to note that the reply of the Government is silent on the action taken in this regard. It simply states that the funds of sustainability of drinking water have been increased from 5% to 20%. The Committee would like the Government to furnish a specific reply in this regard.

K. Need for time bound manpower training for testing water quality

Recommendation Serial No. 33
(Para No. 6.15)

35. The Committee had recommended as under:—

"The National Rural Drinking Water Quality Management and Surveillance Programme launched in 2006 aimed at testing of all drinking water sources by grass-root level workers in each Panchayat by simple-to-use field test kits. So far, 1.96 lakh such workers have been trained out of 11.66 lakh who need to be trained for water quality monitoring and surveillance activities. The Committee, during examination of previous Demands for Grants, have been informed about the deadline which have been extended thrice as States could not complete the training within the time period. The Department further informed that the training is coupled with supply of kits to Gram Panchayats and for large number of States such as Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Jharkhand, Jammu and Kashmir, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan Sikkim, Tripura, Uttarakhand and all UTs since Gram Panchayat

level training has not been completed, the kits could not be supplied. The Committee on the aforesaid issue would like the Department to seek time-bound commitment from States to complete the training of Gram Panchayats for testing water quality in village Panchayats. The Department on their part should provide all assistance to the States after identifying the bottlenecks faced by them. The Committee would like to suggest that through PRIs, the community has to be made conscious of water quality and the testing kits should be made available to other institutions also such as schools, colleges and qualified NGIOs etc. in the area. Further, through these institutions, low cost technologies for water treatment at household habitation level may be marketed with the aid of district level authorities. The Committee maintain that a multi-pronged strategy with the involvement of various related ministries is imperative for implementing measures for improvement in water quality and a systematic and holistic approach for linking both quality and quantity aspect of water management must be evolved. The Committee would like the Department to earnestly consider the aforesaid aspects and formulate effective strategies for water management."

[Recommendation (Para No. 6.15)]

36. The Department in the action taken reply has stated as under:—

"As per the National Rural Drinking Water Quality Monitoring and Surveillance Programme, about 3.39 lakh people have been trained in the country, as per reports available as on 16/4/2009. States have been requested to complete all training programmes, latest by December, 2009 and also to enter data online into the Integrated Management Information System developed by the Department. Analysis of such data would then, provide opportunity to the Department to provide necessary assistance to the States after identifying the bottlenecks faced by them. Household based and Community based Terracotta filters are being promoted for tackling iron and bacteriological contamination. The technology is very simple and the products could be locally produced by trained NGOs/Women Self Help

Groups. Such action has already been initiated in Karnataka and Tripura States. Treatment of Arsenic, Fluoride and Salinity are not advised locally as these treatment plants/filters are difficult to operate and maintain and involve serious reject management problems. Another new programme called "Jalmani" was launched on 14/11/2008 for providing stand alone drinking water purification systems in rural schools in the country for providing pure drinking water to rural school children at the consumption point."

[Reply to Recommendation (Para No. 6.15)]

37. The Committee are dismayed to learn from the action taken reply that as against the target of manpower training of 11.66 lakh persons for testing water quality in the country at grass root Panchayat level, only 3.39 lakh persons could be trained in a time span of four years starting from 2006 to 2009. The Committee have been informed that State Governments have been requested to complete the ongoing training programme by December, 2009 and action has already been taken in two States of Karnataka and Tripura. The Committee are at a loss to understand how the task which the Department could not achieve in four years time can now be achieved in coming four months time. The Committee deplore the way the Department has handled the important issue of manpower training for water quality testing in the country during the preceding four years. The Committee, therefore, would like the Department to have a relook at its strategy on the issue and rework its action plan in close coordination with States as the progress is not satisfactory at all.

CHAPTER II

RECOMMENDATIONS THAT HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

Recommendation (Para No. 2.10)

Provision of access to clean and safe drinking water is one of the biggest challenges facing the country at present. In this regard, having authentic and reliable data is crucial for planning future strategies for providing people sufficient, safe, accessible and affordable water for domestic and personal use. The Committee in their previous Reports had consistently been recommending to the Department to undertake measures to obtain authentic and reliable data with regard to FC, PC and NC habitations in rural areas of the country. At the same time, the Committee expressed apprehension over the tall claims made by the Department of coverage status of more than 90 per cent over the last few years. While acknowledging the efforts made by the Department in this regard by initiating Habitation Survey in 2003, the Committee had felt that the process of revalidation of results of Habitation Survey by IIPA should not be prolonged, as within the said period the entire scenario of coverage status would undergo transformation again which would render the entire exercise futile and irrelevant. Further, the Committee in their Twenty-Eighth Report on Demands for Grants had expressed concern in the strongest terms over the discrepancy highlighted between the updated data of CAP 99 and the Habitation Survey 2003 results. However, despite the shortcomings, the Committee appreciate the fact that the Department have managed to have the corrected data of Habitation Survey after the revalidation by IIPA and verification by the Monitoring Division of the Ministry, which has not been put in the public domain. The Committee hope that this data will serve as the basis for future planning and projections by the Department and will be regularly updated by the States so as

to give a transparent picture of the real scenario of availability of drinking water in rural areas.

Reply of the Government

The Habitation survey was conducted in 2003 and the data was validated through IIPA and hosted on Departmental website in August, 2006. Since then this data has been updated in 2007 and 2008. Presently this data is being realigned and updated for implementation of the revised RWS guidelines.

[Department of Drinking Water Supply (Ministry of Rural Development) O.M. No. H.11011/2/2009 dated 11 June, 2009]

Comments of the Committee

(Please *see* Paragraph No. 7 of Chapter I of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No. 2.11)

Further, as informed by the Department, the said baseline data is to be updated on yearly basis by the States through software developed for the purpose by enabling online data entry. The Committee commend the efforts of the Department in this regard and hope that the Centre would provide all kind of assistance to the States to ensure purposeful utilization of the said software. The PHED and Panchayat staff should be familiarized with the system for effective reporting of the situation on the ground. The Committee may be suitably apprised about the performance of the various States regarding the online data entry system.

Reply of the Government

The Department has organized a series of training programmes to familiarise the States with the software. Also, special training programmes have been conducted at the request of the States. The Department has also developed an online feedback section, where queries can be sent directly to the concerned officer of the Department. The status of data entry is also monitored every month. With all these efforts, all States have now started using the online system. A few States

still have some problems which are not related to the software. These are:—

1. Jammu and Kashmir, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram and Sikkim are not very regular in data entry due to local network connectivity problems.

2. Andhra Pradesh was not regular in the last five months due to re-organization of the department dealing with rural water supply.

However, corrective action is being taken with these States also, so that their performance becomes better in the coming months

[Department of Drinking Water Supply (Ministry of Rural Development) O.M. No. H.11011/2/2009 dated 11 June, 2009]

Comments of the Committee

(Please *see* Paragraph No. 7 of Chapter I of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No. 2.12)

After comprehensively examining the issue and problems related to data management, the Committee would further like the Department to evolve some mechanism for ascertaining the names of the FC/PC and NC habitations for each State. A provision for inclusion of such names should be made in the online monitoring system and hosted on the website in order to make the data more reliable. Appropriate changes should be made in the format of the software as well as in the Monthly Progress Report in this regard. This would not only help the Department to have a clear record of coverage status as well as slippages in each State but with continuous updation, the Department would also be able to keep a track of other relevant details such as time required to cover NC/FC habitation in particular areas, the funds required and spent for the same for each habitation etc. This would go a long way in not only ensuring reliability of the coverage status but also aid in tackling specific problems of certain habitations. The Committee urge the Department to take expeditious measures to

implement the recommendation of the Committee and inform them about the steps initiated in this regard.

Reply of the Government

The names of all habitations have also been hosted on the web-site. The changes have also been made in the software to enter the habitations targeted to be covered each year and all States have been asked to enter this data from 2009 onwards. As noted by the Committee, this will help in tracking the funds required and spent on each habitation.

[Department of Drinking Water Supply (Ministry of Rural Development) O.M. No. H.11011/2/2009 dated 11 June, 2009]

Recommendation (Para No. 2.20)

As already emphasised by the Committee, water is the lifeblood of a community and hence no section of the population should be deprived of the valuable water resource. The Committee in their previous Demands for Grants Reports had been recommending to the Department to give due importance to habitations having population less than 100 which are not included under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of ARWSP. The Committee have persistently been recommending to the Department to shun their complacency and insensitivity in this regard and take urgent action to cover such habitations with less than 100 population on a priority basis. The Committee are perturbed to note that a total of 46,000 such habitations *i.e.* only 50 per cent have been covered so far, while the rest have not been covered with drinking water facilities. The Committee would like to emphasize to the Department that shifting the responsibility on to the State Governments would not fulfil the objective of improving access of all rural households to drinking water facilities as presently the States are not even able to fulfil their targets of coverage of habitations with population of more than 100 persons or 20 households. The Committee are dismayed to learn from the replies of the Department that none of the States have reported coverage of habitations with population less than 100, which itself is a telling

reminder to the Union to undertake this huge responsibility as these habitations may be in most difficult and backward areas requiring more financial resources.

Reply of the Government

The recommendation of the Committee has been implemented now in the revised Guidelines. According to paragraph 1 of the revised guidelines, the goal is, "to provide every rural person with adequate water for drinking, cooking and other domestic basic needs on a sustainable basis. This basic requirement should meet certain minimum water quality standards and be readily and conveniently accessible at all times and in all situations".

The restriction of only covering habitations with 100 or more population or 20 households has now been removed. The funds are now to be used to provide potable drinking water to all habitations, irrespective of the size of the habitation.

[Department of Drinking Water Supply (Ministry of Rural Development) O.M. No. H.11011/2/2009 dated 11 June, 2009]

Comments of the Committee

(Please *see* Paragraph No. 13 of Chapter I of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No. 2.21)

The Committee were further informed by the Department that such habitations are proposed to be covered in the post Bharat Nirman period of Eleventh Plan. The Committee would like to state that in many sparsely populated areas within States, there may be large number of habitations with scattered population and uneven development. This, however, should not deny this segment of the population their basic human right of access to clean and safe drinking water. The Government should undertake all endeavours for full realization of universal access to clean and safe drinking water. The Committee, therefore, strongly recommend the Department to cover all rural habitations, irrespective of their size, on a priority basis and undertake appropriate exercise *viz.* revision of ARWSP norms and

provide 100 percent funds for the same. The Committee would like the Department to devise concrete strategies for the purpose and keep the Committee informed.

Reply of the Government

The recommendation of the Committee has been implemented now in the revised Guidelines. According to paragraph 1 of the revised guidelines, the goal is, "to provide every rural person with adequate water for drinking, cooking and other domestic basic needs on a sustainable basis. This basic requirement should meet certain minimum water quality standards and be readily and conveniently accessible at all times and in all situations".

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[Department of Drinking Water Supply (Ministry of Rural Development) O.M. No. H.11011/2/2009 dated 11 June, 2009]

Comments of the Committee

(Please *see* Paragraph No. 13 of Chapter I of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No. 2.27)

The Committee feel that fixation of realistic targets and timely achievement of the same is of vital importance in order to extend the basic amenity of drinking water to vast majority of rural people. The data regarding targets and achievements during the Ninth and the Tenth Plan reveal that for many years *viz.*, 1999-2000, 2000-2001, 2001-2002, 2003-2004, 2004-2005, there is underachievement of targets. Further, as per the Bharat Nirman targets, about 55,067 Not Covered/ Partially Covered habitations are to be covered during the target period of 2005—2009, the details of which are indicated in the earlier paragraphs. The above indicated data with regard to Bharat Nirman programme signify that even after completion of three years of the Bharat Nirman period, the achievement reported has been only about 67 per cent. The Committee take strong exception to the under

achievement of targets during many years of Ninth and Tenth Plan period. Further, the Committee are deeply dissatisfied with the achievements made under Bharat Nirman wherein about 36 per cent of the target habitations still needed to be covered although less than 12 months remain of the Bharat Nirman period. In this scenario, the Committee have strong apprehensions about achieving the targets under Bharat Nirman. With the tardy pace of implementation of Bharat Nirman programme, the Committee would like the Department to work with sense of urgency to ensure that the objectives of this ambitious programme of the Government are fulfilled within schedule. This becomes more important in view of the fact that the latest Survey indicates there are about 3.4 lakh NC and PC habitations which need to be addressed right away so as to bring about any positive impact on the lives of the people. The Committee would like the Department to work out a clear cut strategy to fulfil the set targets within the time period and ascertain reasons for underachievement from the States in this regard. The Department should also insist upon them to take corrective measures accordingly. Besides, the targets fixed should be commensurate with the ground reality. The Department must hold extensive review meetings with the States and provide all kind of support, incentives and financial and technical guidance to them to ensure that gross underachievement of this kind is not repeated. The Department may inform the Committee of the necessary measures undertaken by them in this regard.

Reply of the Government

The Department of Drinking Water Supply held review meetings with States throughout the year. Also, the poor performing States were reviewed periodically for improving their performance during 2007-08 and 2008-09. As a result, the cumulative performance upto March, 2009 under Bharat Nirman as reported by States so far indicates that 54,430 habitations which were under uncovered category have been covered with potable water supply. In regard to the slipped back habitations as per the reports received from the States so far 354,015 habitations have been covered with potable water supply. This figure also includes some habitations which although belonging to the slipped back category were not included in the original Bharat Nirman target.

This explains the reason for covering more number of targets than the target stipulated under slipped back category under Bharat Nirman. The new Guidelines under National Rural Drinking Water programme introduced with effect from 1.4.2009 focuses on ensuring sustainability in the Drinking Water Supply programme through source strengthening as well as systematic improvements for O&M purposes. The action plan outlined in the Guidelines in this regard will lessen the slipping back of covered habitations in the future.

[Department of Drinking Water Supply (Ministry of Rural Development) O.M. No. H.11011/2/2009 dated 11 June, 2009]

Recommendation (Para No. 2.29)

Another important aspect noted by the Committee relates to inclusion of the category of 'slipped back habitations' in the overall targets under the Bharat Nirman programme. The Habitation Survey 2003 and the updated data indicated only FC/PC and NC categories and does not include any 'slipped back category'. However, the targets under Bharat Nirman include NC, PC, slipped back and quality affected habitations, wherein higher achievements are quoted by including the coverage of slipped back habitations. Further, there is marginal achievement under the category of uncovered habitations, which include both NC and PC habitations. The Committee would like to reiterate their recommendation made in the Thirty-Seventh Report on Demands for Grants to set clear-cut targets for NC/PC habitations under the Bharat Nirman and the 'slipped back habitations' should be depicted separately. This would enable the Committee to analyze the position with regard to achievements of NC/PC habitations for each year and avoid the confusion created due to inclusion of various categories in the Bharat Nirman programme. The Committee would like the Department to take serious note of the observation made by the Committee and take remedial measures. The Committee may be apprised of the concrete action taken in this regard.

Reply of the Government

As recommended by the Committee, separate targets were set for uncovered habitations and NC/PC habitations, which were categorized under "slipped back", from 2008-09. A report indicating uncovered, slipped-back and quality-affected habitations separately has been

devised and hosted in the Department's website under the Bharat Nirman link.

[Department of Drinking Water Supply (Ministry of Rural Development) O.M. No. H.11011/2/2009 dated 11 June, 2009]

Recommendation (Para No. 3.13)

During the international decade for Action 'Water for Life' 2005-2015, national governments and international organisations need to expand the provision of basic services to all its citizens especially the rural masses, and to achieve the said objective substantial investment in the sector is of vital importance. The Committee are perturbed to note that even after investments to the tune of approximately Rs. 75,000 crores over the last six decades for the sector, more than 3.7 lakh habitations are still Not Covered or Partially Covered, the problem being further compounded by large incidences of slippages. The Committee acknowledge the fact that investments in the sector have been gradually increasing over the years, as reflected by the Plan-wise data of allocation provided by the Planning Commission indicated above. However, with the average investment of less than 0.2 per cent of GDP for the sector, the Committee feel that there is an urgent need to enhance the allocation commensurate with the mammoth task of addressing large number of NC/PC , slipped back and quality affected habitations. In view of the above, adequate financing by the State for such essential service as drinking water especially in a developing country like India, is of prime importance. The Committee would, therefore, like the Department to continue with the efforts for seeking enhanced allocation for the sector, in order to be able to make meaningful achievements in the sector.

Reply of the Government

The Department had got Rs. 7300 crore for the year 2008-09 and was able to utilize the full amount. It also got an additional Rs. 200 crore for Jalmani programme. For the year 2009-10, the Department has sought Rs. 8500 crore.

[Department of Drinking Water Supply (Ministry of Rural Development) O.M. No. H.11011/2/2009 dated 11 June, 2009]

Recommendation (Para No. 3.14)

The Committee are further constrained to note that against the allocation proposed to the Planning Commission, the outlay provided to the Department is comparatively lesser for the last many years. Even for the Eleventh Plan against the proposal of Rs. 55,099 the outlay provided by the Planning Commission was only Rs. 39,490 marking a huge shortfall of resources. The Committee are also disappointed to note that during 2006-07 and 2007-08, the funds were reduced at the RE stage. The Department had informed that the fund requirement was projected on the basis of Action Plan from States for Bharat Nirman programme. In view of this scenario, the Committee feel that there is urgent need to step up the outlay in consonance with the requirement for the purpose. The Committee, therefore, strongly recommend that the Department should make efforts so that the outlay proposed is provided by the Planning Commission and is not reduced further at the RE stage. The Department should strongly putforth their case in this regard to the Planning Commission/Ministry of Finance so that important schemes for providing drinking water to rural masses do not suffer due to resource crunch. The Committee should be informed of the specific measures taken by the Department with regard to the issues discussed above.

Reply of the Government

There was no reduction in RE stage during 2008-09. The Department was able to obtain an additional Rs. 200 crore for its Jalmani programme.

[Department of Drinking Water Supply (Ministry of Rural Development) O.M. No. H.11011/2/2009 dated 11 June, 2009]

Recommendation (Para No. 3.16)

The Committee have been informed that some States facing resource crunch are not able to provide matching share while in other cases, there is delay in Utilisation Certificates. The specific recommendations of the Committee regarding matching share have been made in the subsequent part of the Report. However, regarding

UCs from States, the Committee strongly recommend to make the best use of online monitoring system to obtain the UCs from the States in time. Besides, sincere efforts should be made by the Department to ensure that underspending is reduced to minimum so that the public spending on this social sector becomes more constructive and fruitful. The Committee should be duly informed about the specific steps taken in the light of the concerns expressed above.

Reply of the Government

The Guidelines have been changed so that from 2009, all progress is to reported online and monitored accordingly. Regarding underspending, all poor performing States were reviewed on a monthly basis to help improve their performance. In 2008-09, only two States could not show full utilization of available funds, as mentioned in reply to Recommendation no. 3.15.

[Department of Drinking Water Supply (Ministry of Rural Development) O.M. No. H.11011/2/2009 dated 11 June, 2009]

Recommendation (Para No. 4.14)

The Committee recognize the fact that water being a State subject, the ultimate responsibility for implementation of drinking water schemes rests with the State Governments. The Centre, however, provides financial and technical assistance to the States in this regard through the Centrally sponsored scheme *viz.* ARWSP. However, as pointed out by the Department, some of the States facing resource constraints are not able to provide matching share as under ARWSP (normal) the funding pattern between the Centre and the States is 50:50. Even the Secretary, during oral evidence, admitted that some States are not able to provide matching share which causes serious problems in implementation of the Scheme. Thus, such a condition of providing matching share by the States irrespective of their capability to do the same, deprives a large section of population from drinking water provision. Besides, inability to provide matching share cause further delay in release of Central funds and consequent underspending which lead to further difficulties in effective

implementation of ARWSP. Reiterating their recommendation made in Thirty-seventh Report, the Committee would, therefore, like the Department to identify such States which face difficulty in providing matching share. The Department of Drinking Water Supply should then undertake comprehensive exercise to evolve a mechanism to assist such special category States by providing additional funds to them for the purpose. The ARWSP guidelines with regard to matching share contribution for those States may be suitably modified, so that drinking water schemes do not suffer due to the lack of provision of matching share by those States. The Committee would like to be apprised of the concrete action taken in this regard.

Reply of the Government

The North East States (including Sikkim) and Jammu and Kashmir were facing difficulty in providing the 50% matching share. From 2009-10, the funding pattern for these States has been changed to 90:10 and the Guidelines have been accordingly modified.

[Department of Drinking Water Supply (Ministry of Rural Development) O.M. No. H.11011/2/2009 dated 11 June, 2009]

Recommendation (Para No. 4.16)

The problem of water crisis can be solved meaningfully and in a sustainable way only through close partnership between the Centre and the States. Under ARWSP the Centre is providing financial assistance to the States. However, the Department's accountability goes much beyond financial assistance and for this reason, all kind of technical support must be provided to the States to make significant progress towards making universal water provision possible. The Department have informed that technical inputs are being provided by representative of CGWB who is represented in State level sanctioning committee. With regard to water availability in the ground, the Department has circulated HGM to ten States which may be utilized to know about the underground water availability. The Committee hold that similar HGM maps may be prepared and circulated to the remaining States also, in collaboration with the

Ministry of Water Resources. The Committee would like the Department to ensure optimal usage of these maps as well as other technology manuals by the States through regular and frequent coordination with them. The Committee would also appreciate holding of regular technical workshops in each State with guidance from experts under the aegis of Ministry of Water Resources. The Committee would like proactive involvement of the Department in this regard.

Reply of the Government

The Department go prepared 2,303 Hydro-Geo-Morphological (HGM) maps or ground water prospect maps on 1:50,000 scale using satellite data in 10 States *viz.*, Andhra Pradesh (part), Gujarat, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka and Kerala and distributed to the State Governments. Services of National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC), ISRO have been utilized for preparation of these maps. Similar map preparation has also been undertaken in another 10 States *viz.*, Andhra Pradesh (remaining part), J&K, Haryana, Punjab, West Bengal (part), Uttar Pradesh (part), Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Maharashtra. In order to build capacities of State implementing agencies, the Department has been regularly conducting National Workshops focusing Sustainability and Drinking Water Security. The National Workshops and State level reviews held in April' 2007, July' 2007, May' 2008 have all emphasized on Sustainability of drinking water sources and experts from CGWB, Ministry of Water Resources were invited to participate actively. The latest National Workshop held Thiruvananthapuram on 9-3-2009 focused on creating drinking water security, which was followed by a field visit to Vivekananda Kendra, Kanyakumari to show various models of rainwater harvesting to the State Government representatives.

[Department of Drinking Water Supply (Ministry of Rural Development) O.M. No. H.11011/2/2009 dated 11 June, 2009]

Recommendation (Para No. 4.22)

The Committee appreciate the fact that due to the serious problems in implementation of the Scheme, the Department have

decided to discontinue the Scheme and introduce reforms which will entirely depend on the State Governments. The State Governments are supposed to sign Memorandum of Understanding in this regard with the Union. The Department must collaborate with all States to sign the Memorandum of Understanding and chalk out their Action Plan on the reforms within a stipulated timeframe. The Committee may be apprised of the feedback from the States in this regard.

Reply of the Government

The new Guidelines have incorporated the signing of MoU in 2009. The Department of Drinking Water Supply will collaborate with all States to sign the MoU.

[Department of Drinking Water Supply (Ministry of Rural Development) O.M. No. H.11011/2/2009 dated 11 June, 2009]

Recommendation (Para No. 4.23)

Further, the Committee would like the Department to undertake more efforts to ensure that the problems encountered during implementation of Swajaldhara are not repeated while implementing reforms by the States from the Eleventh Plan. Towards this end, all measures must be undertaken to pursue the States to strengthen PRIs. The Department must proactively work in consultation with the Ministry of Panchayati Raj to help in capacity building of PRIs, which is crucial to the success of reforms to be introduced by the States. Further, the Union Government should assist the States to promote reforms principle through extensive campaigning within the States and ensure that all the groundwork is done by the States before launching the Reforms Scheme by the States. Thus, for these reforms to be realized in letter and intent, both the Central and the State Governments need to deal with drinking water provision in rural areas as a strong political, social and an economic issue and work in close cooperation and partnership to achieve the objective.

Reply of the Government

The main purpose of funding Communication and Capacity Development Units in each State is to improve the capacity of PRIs.

The States will also be given incentive for transferring assets to PRIs, in the form of 10% weightage during allocation of funds itself. This criteria was also supported by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj.

[Department of Drinking Water Supply (Ministry of Rural Development) O.M. No. H.11011/2/2009 dated 11 June, 2009]

Recommendation (Para No. 5.20)

Further, the Committee were informed about a variety of reasons for slippages such as sources going dry due to lowering ground water table, systems working below rated capacity etc. The Department also informed that they are strongly pursuing with States to adopt sustainability measures and proposal for incentives to States for ensuring sustainability is under consideration. The Committee would like the Department to expeditiously finalise the proposal so that States can be motivated to take up sustainability measures and incidences of slippages are minimized. In this regard, the State-level sanctioning Committee could play a vital role by insisting upon the States to include sustainability component in each project before sanctioning funds from the Central Sector. The Committee would like a categorical response and the details of the incentive measures proposed in this regard, so that this important aspect is accorded its due priority.

Reply of the Government

The proposal to provide for incentives to States to take up sustainability measures has been finalized. 20% of the funds of the scheme can now be used for such measures, with no State share. Earlier, the State had to provide 25% as its share to use only 5% of the total funds for sustainability. Flexibility has also been given to States to use this fund for coverage, in which case they will have to provide the 50% matching share. Thus if a State uses the sustainability component, it will be required to provide less funds in its budget as matching share. Detailed guidelines of the works that can be taken up under this component have also been issued, which include convergence with other schemes, recharge measures, rain water harvesting, etc.

[Department of Drinking Water Supply (Ministry of Rural Development) O.M. No. H.11011/2/2009 dated 11 June, 2009]

Recommendation (Para No. 5.21)

Besides, as per targets set under Bharat Nirman, about 3.31 lakh slipped back habitations were proposed to be covered during 2004-2005 to 2008-2009. However, during examination of Demands for Grants (2008-2009), the latest information with regard to coverage status was provided indicating only about 64 per cent achievement so far. The Committee in their Thirty-Seventh Report had expressed serious apprehension regarding achievements of targets in the remaining one year of the Bharat Nirman programme with the tardy progress made under this programme with regard to coverage of slipped back habitations. The Department, however, justified the situation and expressed optimism about achieving the targets by March, 2007 as maximum coverage is reported in the last quarter of the financial year. Further, during the last year *viz.* 2007-2008, the achievement as reported upto March 2008 was only 50 per cent. In this scenario of unfulfilled targets of previous year along with huge target of last year of Bharat Nirman period, the Committee feel that the Department should immediately chalk out an action plan to ensure that the incidences of slippages are arrested within the deadline set under Bharat Nirman. The action plan must include not only the solutions for addressing the current incidences of slippages but also preventive measures so that there is no recurrence of such slippages in future. The Department must give clear guidelines to the States to identify reasons and implement both preventive and corrective measures to address this crucial aspect related to drinking water. The Committee may be apprised of the concrete measures taken by the Department in this direction and response of the States.

Reply of the Government

The Department of Drinking Water Supply held review meetings with States throughout the year. Also, the poor performing States were reviewed periodically for improving their performance during 2007-08 and 2008-09. As a result, the cumulative performance up to

March, 2009 under Bharat Nirman as reported by States so far indicates that 354,015 habitations under the slipped back category have been covered with potable water supply. This figure also includes some habitations which although belonging to the slipped back category were not included in the original Bharat Nirman target. The action plan outlined in the Guidelines in this regard will lessen the slipping back of covered habitations in the future.

[Department of Drinking Water Supply (Ministry of Rural Development) O.M. No. H.11011/2/2009 dated 11 June, 2009]

Recommendation (Para No. 5.23)

In order to work meaningfully towards full realization of the right to clean and safe drinking water, sustainability of the sources and the systems is of vital importance. The Committee in all their previous Reports have made useful and valuable suggestions regarding the aforesaid aspect. One very serious challenge related to sustainability of sources related to depleting ground water as large number of drinking water sources are dependent on ground water such as stand pipes, hand pumps, ponds etc. Depletion of ground water table not only affects the water availability, but also contributes to deterioration of water quality, which adversely impacts the health and well being of the people. The Committee, therefore, have repeatedly emphasized on the need to reduce over dependence on ground water in drinking water schemes and to take all initiatives for rainwater harvesting measures to augment the ground water table. The Ministry of Water Resources, during evidence on the subject had informed that the Central Ground Water Board provides information on ground water availability unit-wise, over-exploited and critical block and other related inputs through ground water prospect maps and Hydro-geomorphological maps. The Committee, therefore, strongly recommend the Department to ensure that such vital information is utilised by the States in their drinking water projects. In this regard, merely advising the States to utilise that data will not serve the purpose. Rather, specific guidelines should be issued to the

State Governments to make use of this vital information available district-wise in each project so that a long term solution may be formulated for the depleting ground water table. Besides, the Committee would like the Department to evolve mechanism for getting regular feedback from the States in this regard and inform accordingly. On the issue of regulatory framework for over-extraction of ground water, the Committee in the previous Reports had been insisting upon the Department to request States to put in place such a legislation at the earliest. As per the information provided by the Department, so far only States of Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, West Bengal, Himachal Pradesh along with Union Territories of Lakshadweep and Pondicherry have enacted and are implementing the ground water legislation. The Department have been avoiding serious response on the said issue by stating that this is the mandate of the Ministry of Water Resources and as such, Department of Drinking Water Supply has a limited role to play. Reiterating their earlier recommendation, the Committee would like to categorically assert that since more than 95 per cent of water supply schemes are dependent on ground water sources, some kind of regulation on over-extraction of ground water is imperative and to that end, the Department of Drinking Water Supply should work in close cooperation and coordination with the Ministry of Water Resources for implementing the Model Bill for regulating over-extraction of ground water. The Committee are disturbed to note that despite the issue becoming significant in view of the utilization of ground water by Multinational Companies, so far only six States have managed to enact the legislation. The Committee would, therefore, like the Department to take proactive initiatives in this regard and apprise the Committee about the same.

Reply of the Government

The Department has already informed the State Governments to move away from over dependence of ground water to conjunctive use

of surface water, ground water and rainwater harvesting. Technical inputs like HGM and other ground water maps should be utilized for citing appropriate locations for recharge structures. In this regard, the Department got prepared 2,303 HGM maps on 1:50,000 scale using satellite data in 10 States *viz.*, Andhra Pradesh (part), Gujarat, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka and Kerala and distributed to the State Governments. Services of National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC), ISRO have been utilized in preparation of these maps. As informed by NRSC, these States have utilized HGM maps and constructed 7,030 recharge structures. Similar map preparation has also been taken up in another 10 States *viz.*, Andhra Pradesh (remaining part), J&K, Haryana, Punjab, West Bengal (part), Uttar Pradesh (part), Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Maharashtra. The Online Integrated Management Information System now developed allows State Governments to select habitations on-line which are being considered for new projects. It is also emphasized that sustainability component has to be ensured in every project which will be approved by the State level Scheme Sanctioning Committees. Co-ordination meetings with Ministry of Water Resources are held periodically and instructions were issued that a representative from the Regional Office of the Central Ground Water Board will have to be present in every SLSC meeting for ensuring that all projects approval by the Committee incorporate provision for sustainability of sources. Further, during the monthly review and special review meetings held with States, they are being requested repeatedly to understand the importance of ground water legislation and enact the legislation on ground water regulation and control, so that sustainability of drinking water sources is also ensured. As per latest reports available, 11 States/UTs *viz.* Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chandigarh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Goa, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Lakshadweep, Pondicherry, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal, have enacted such legislation.

[Department of Drinking Water Supply (Ministry of Rural Development) O.M. No. H.11011/2/2009 dated 11 June, 2009]

Recommendation (Para No. 5.24)

Another issue related to ground water availability is the issue of recharge of ground water through artificial means and rainwater harvesting. The Committee have taken note of the efforts made in this direction through workshops, Seminars, theme documents etc. as narrated above highlighting the use of surface water harvesting. Besides, the Ground Water Advisory Council gave certain suggestions on this theme such as making rainwater harvesting mandatory through local bodies, regulating withdrawal of ground water by industries, integrating modern recharge technologies with traditional water harvesting technologies. The Committee believe that these are extremely pertinent suggestions and as and when implemented in true letter and spirit, can provide a durable solution for the drinking water needs of rural masses. The Committee would like to recommend inclusion of specific proposals incorporating the suggestions in the Model Bill. The Committee may also be apprised of the action taken in this regard.

Reply of the Government

The Chief Secretaries of all State Governments have been requested to take stringent action against the agencies/authorities polluting underground water sources. The States have also been requested to initiate coordinated efforts between PHED, Local bodies/ Civic agencies and Pollution Control Board to put in place, the discipline and regime by which any water body including ground water, which is source of most of the drinking water supply projects in rural areas is given the highest priority for projection under the existing law. This was also discussed in National Workshop for 'Protection of Drinking Water Sources and provisions of potable Water' in May, 2008. It was attended by leading legal experts, the concerned Ministries and State agencies in the Central/State Governments and other stake-holders.

[Department of Drinking Water Supply (Ministry of Rural Development) O.M. No. H.11011/2/2009 dated 11 June, 2009]

Recommendation (Para No. 5.25)

The Committee while acknowledging the efforts of the Department for promoting rainwater harvesting, would like the Department to also pursue with the States for raising mass awareness with regard to this issue. Besides, the Government during evidence conveyed to the Committee that the State of Mizoram has pioneered the model of rooftop rainwater harvesting. The Committee recommend that such success stories should be replicated in other States and concrete action should be taken by them.

Reply of the Government

In order to promote rainwater harvesting in a big way, a National Workshop on creating drinking water security was organized in Thiruvananthapuram in March, 2009, wherein State Government representatives, Panchayat representatives, NGOs, local engineering college students, Technical experts totalling to about 5,000 have participated. This was the first National Workshop on Sustainability seen as a nation-wide drive to bring awareness for shifting focus towards conjunctive use of ground water, surface water and roof-water harvesting instead of over-dependence on single source of water. During the monthly review meetings of States, they are being suggested to follow the success model of Mizoram of roof water harvesting systems. Also similar success stories on rural water supply collected from Orissa, Uttarakhand, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh have been uploaded into the departmental website for wider dissemination. Two difficult areas *viz.*, hilly area (Tripura) and islands (Andaman and Nicobar) were selected by the Department and a multi-disciplinary Central Team was deputed to study the existing water supply system and prepare Strategy papers on Sustainable drinking water supply. These two strategy papers are also uploaded into the departmental website at *www.ddws.gov.in* for replication by other States.

[Department of Drinking Water Supply (Ministry of Rural Development) O.M. No. H.11011/2/2009 dated 11 June, 2009]

Recommendation (Para No. 5.29)

The Committee are concerned to note the underutilization by various States of 5 per cent ARWSP funds meant exclusively for sustainability. In this regard, the Secretary during the course of oral evidence has submitted that the Department is now proposing that 100 per cent allocation provided by the Department would be linked project-wise and the project which has been funded for sustainability would be taken on board. The Secretary has further informed that the proposal for the same has been forwarded to the EFC. The Committee while appreciating the initiatives taken by the Department would like that such innovative reforms must be introduced at the earliest for making marked improvements in the drinking water sector and Committee be kept apprised in this regard.

Reply of the Government

After obtaining approval of the EFC and the Cabinet, The National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP) was launched in the country with effect from 1-4-2009. According to the NRDWP guidelines, funds for sustainability of drinking water sources have been increased from earlier 5% under ARWSP (on 75:25 Centre to State share) to 20% on 100% GOI assistance. Further, projects under Sustainability component have to be implemented on "Swajaldhara" mode *i.e.*, involving community mobilization and participation in decision making.

[Department of Drinking Water Supply (Ministry of Rural Development) O.M. No. H.11011/2/2009 dated 11 June, 2009]

Recommendation (Para No. 6.11)

An analysis of the drinking water sector while examining Demands for Grants of previous years revealed that there are many aspects to the challenges confronting the drinking water sector today. One of the central issues related to the subject is the quality of drinking water. The Committee, while examining previous Demands for Grants,

have made the aforesaid aspect a key concern and made various pertinent observations/recommendations to ensure safe drinking water in a sustainable manner to all across the country.

Reply of the Government

The Department agrees with the Committee's observations that drinking water quality is one of the pertinent areas of concern and all out efforts have to be made to provide safe drinking water to all villages in the country.

[Department of Drinking Water Supply (Ministry of Rural Development) O.M. No. H.11011/2/2009 dated 11 June, 2009]

Recommendation (Para No. 6.12)

The Water Quality Survey conducted by States indicated about 2 lakh habitations affected with various contaminants like arsenic, fluoride, iron, nitrate, salinity or a combination of them. Such contaminated water is the major factor responsible for many of the deaths in a developing country like India due to water-borne diseases. Water scarcity also forces people to consume contaminated water affecting their health and well-being. In this regard, the Committee recommend that all necessary investments should be made to address the quality of drinking water as it has a profound impact on health and economic status of the people. The Standing Committee in their Thirty-seventh Report have made detailed recommendation for launching a nationwide awareness programme to educate masses about the hazards of contaminated water on the model of AIDS, Polio campaigns etc. Such a programme should involve all stakeholders, such as policy-makers, Centre, State and local authorities, Civil Society, NGOs etc. active in the field. The programme should clearly spell out the linkages between safe drinking water, health, environment, poverty alleviation and economic benefit of improved access to safe and uncontaminated water. The programme must involve women, communities, PRIs and school students as active participants in the process. Thus, coordination and consultation with other related

Ministries such as Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Department of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Environment and Forests, Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Department of Elementary Education etc. must be held and all efforts should be made to sensitise and educate people in regard to the benefits of safe drinking water. Further, the Secretary during evidence stated that for iron and salinity, the easiest way is to dilute contaminated water with better quality water. Besides boiling, chlorine tablets for disinfection and such low cost technologies must be popularized in the aforesaid campaign. The Committee strongly recommend to the Government to treat quality of drinking water as a core developmental issue and to take up the matter in a mission mode.

Reply of the Government

Water Quality and Water Scarcity are amongst the most important concerns as far as drinking water management in the country is concerned. Over-exploitation of ground water also leads to leaching of chemical contamination into aquifers while excessive use of inorganic fertilizers result in increase in nitrate content in surface and ground water sources. Open defecation practices in rural areas and disposal of untreated/partially treated domestic sewage from cities and urban local bodies also contaminate drinking water sources bacteriologically. Therefore, PRIs and people at large are required to be made aware of drinking water quality and personal hygiene habits including storing, handling of drinking water and its crucial relationship with health. The National Rural Drinking Water Quality Monitoring and Surveillance Programme focuses at generating such awareness and also builds capacity of local community to test their own drinking water sources through simple field test kits. For this purpose, 100% Central assistance has been provided to all States. This programme envisages training of 5 grassroot level workers in each Panchayat which could include ASHA worker, Anganwadi worker, Science teacher, High School Girl Child, Panchayat member, Women, Retired Army/Defence personnel, Community leader, etc. Some of these grassroot workers are also lower level functionaries related to the programmes implemented

by Ministries of Health and Family Welfare, Women and Child Development, Environment and Forests, Panchayati Raj and HRD. Further, disease surveillance being the mandate of the State Health Department, services of district level Surveillance co-ordinator from local Health Department are envisaged to link disease burden with drinking water quality for taking necessary remedial action by the State rural water supply agency. State Governments have been advised to tackle arsenic and fluoride problems by providing alternate safe surface water sources, iron by dilution/terracotta filters, salinity by artificial recharge of ground water and sub-surface dykes, nitrate by dilution and generating awareness on ecological sanitation (urine diversion composting toilets).

[Department of Drinking Water Supply (Ministry of Rural Development) O.M. No. H.11011/2/2009 dated 11 June, 2009]

Recommendation (Para No. 6.13)

As per the objectives of Bharat Nirman Programme of the Government, 2.17 lakh quality-affected habitations were to be treated during the period 2005-2009. However, as informed by the Department during examination of Demands for Grants (2008-09), only about 94,000 habitations were treated during the period first three years of the programmes leaving about 1.23 lakh habitations to be addressed during the last year of the Bharat Nirman period. The Committee in their Thirty-Seventh Report have taken strong exception to this underachievement of targets under this ambitious programme of the Government. The Secretary during evidence had clarified that number of times, projects from States are not in good shape and therefore, do not get clearance which is the reason for slow progress of the programme. The Committee would like the Department to assist the States in overcoming their limitations and undertake comprehensive exercise to know about the problems being faced by the States so that more projects are forwarded and cleared for tackling quality-affected habitations. The Department should apprise the Committee about the concrete measures initiated in this regard.

Reply of the Government

Under the new NRDWP guidelines, a provision has been made for States to create a State Technical Agency, which could utilize services of Technical experts available in the State or elsewhere, for tackling scarcity, sustainability and quality issues. States can utilize funds provided under "Support services" of NRDWP guidelines for necessary professional services. This would ensure that the projects prepared by the State implementing agency will address all the three important issues mentioned above, before they are submitted for approval of the State Level Scheme Sanctioning Committee before implementation on the ground.

[Department of Drinking Water Supply (Ministry of Rural Development) O.M. No. H.11011/2/2009 dated 11 June, 2009]

CHAPTER III

RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE DO NOT DESIRE TO PURSUE IN VIEW OF GOVERNMENT'S REPLY

-Nil-

CHAPTER IV

RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE

Recommendation (Para No. 2.13)

Besides, the Committee would like to emphasis that merely entering the data online by the States is not adequate, but objective verification of the claimed coverage status is of prime importance. Therefore, the Committee recommend that the Department should evolve a mechanism for objective verification of the data provided by the States at the ground level. The Committee feel that such monitoring and verification procedure would be facilitated as and when the names of the habitations under different categories from the States are also made available. The Committee recommend to the Department to take concrete action on the lines suggested above to make the Panchayat, District and State authorities more accountable and the data more authentic. The Committee emphasise that water is central to the life of each and every individual and given the magnitude of the problem, a sound knowledge and information with regard to coverage status is extremely pertinent for the sector. Such information in public domain is crucial for the State to evolve any long term policy and planning to improve the delivery system and also help mobilize communities and civil society around water related issues. The Committee would like the Department to consider their recommendations/suggestions with all the seriousness and provide specific response on the issues raised above.

Reply of the Government

The names and categories of each habitation has now been made available in public domain. Any person can access the habitation data

base online and view details of water supply schemes of his/her village from the main page of the website under "Citizens Corner" (please *see* the sample below).

Habitation Profile

State Name : Assam	District Name : Cachar
Block Name : Raja Bazar	Gram Panchayat Name : Dewan
Village Name : Lalang Grant	Habitation Name : Lalong Grant

Expected Rain Fall (in mm) - 3312.50
Actual Rain Fall (in mm) — 0 of District (Cachar: in year 2007)

Abstract Data

Total Population	GEN - 4880	SC - 520	ST - 0
Population Covered	GEN - 4880	SC - 520	ST - 0
LPCD	40,000		
No. of Households	1080		
No. of Cattles	410		
No. of Existing Sources/Delivery Points/Stand Post	2		
No. of Safe Sources/Delivery Points/ Stand Post	2		
Water Supply Coverage Status As on 01-04-2009	Fully Covered		
Nearest Water Source (Km.)	0		

A feedback section has also been added to the website for accepting any comment from the public.

[Department of Drinking Water Supply (Ministry of Rural Development) O.M. No. Z-11014/4/2008-GC dated 22nd August, 2008]

Comments of the Committee

(Please *see* Paragraph No. 10 of Chapter I of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No. 2.28)

Further, an analysis of the achievements *vis-à-vis* the targets during Tenth Plan and Bharat Nirman period indicates that

underachievement is much more in the category of Not Covered habitations over the last many years. The Committee feel that these Not Covered habitations may be in the most difficult geographical and backward areas. The Department should, therefore, ask the States to cover these Not Covered habitations on a priority basis and provide necessary support to the States to help them achieve the objective. The Committee would like the Department to give necessary directions to the States in this regard and communicate the same to the Committee.

Reply of the Government

All States have been specifically asked to target not covered habitations. The status of coverage has been given in reply to Recommendation No. 2.27. Only Rajasthan will not be able to achieve the targets, and will continue the work in 2009-10.

[Department of Drinking Water Supply (Ministry of Rural Development) O.M. No. Z-11014/4/2008-GC dated 22nd August, 2008]

Comments of the Committee

(Please *see* Paragraph No. 16 of Chapter I of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No. 3.15)

Besides, the Committee would urge that apart from adequate Government funding for the purpose, the Department should place more emphasis on the issue of meaningful and optimal utilisation of resources in order to make significant progress with regard to provision of clean and safe drinking water to rural masses. The utilisation position plan-wise indicates under-utilisation of ARWSP funds during the Sixth, Seventh, Eighth and Ninth Plans as well as during the Annual Plans of 1990-91 and 1991-92. Further, the same data indicates underutilization from the State share during the Seventh, Eighth, Ninth and Tenth Plans. Besides, if year-wise performance is analysed, the underutilization of allocation can be seen to be a recurrent feature though the situation seems to have improved to certain extent over the last few years especially with regard to utilization of Central share.

The delay in utilization of funds by the States, which results in large unspent balances with the State Governments is a major cause of concern. The Centre through review meetings and close interaction should identify the under-performing States and suggest remedial measures to redress the problem of underspending. The Committee would like the Department to take all concrete steps to ensure accountability from the States regarding optimal utilization of the resources from both Central as well as State share. The Committee may be apprised of the specific measures taken with regard to the same.

Reply of the Government

All poor performing States were reviewed on a monthly basis to help them improve performance. As a result, almost all States showed improved spending and physical progress. Only Jharkhand could not improve performance in 2008-09, and Uttarakhand was marginally below full achievement.

[Department of Drinking Water Supply (Ministry of Rural Development) O.M. No. Z-11014/4/2008-GC dated 22nd August, 2008]

Comments of the Committee

(Please *see* Paragraph No. 19 of Chapter I of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No. 4.15)

Further, on the question of under-utilisation of funds by States, the Committee have been informed that sometimes States face difficulty in providing Utilisation Certificates, while at other times there are certain habitations in remote and inaccessible areas in some States. On timely receipt of UCs from States, the Committee have already recommended to make use of the online monitoring system upto the district and Panchayat level in previous part of the Report. However, the Committee feel that the primary challenge before the Department is not mere utilization of funds on paper, but to ensure that the funds are directed to sectors and segments where they are required the most.

In view of this, the Department should provide all kinds of technical assistance to the States to redress the situation through constant and regular interaction with them by holding review meetings, training programmes/workshops for State/District level officials and provide solutions for the specific requirements of States. The Committee suggest to the Department to give special emphasis to habitations which are in remote and inaccessible areas by providing enhanced resources to them so as to universalize the access of this basic service to each and every part of the country.

Reply of the Government

The Department has been organizing a series of workshops across the country for State and District level officers. Funds are being provided to all States to organize such workshops for panchayat and block level persons. Each State has also been asked to identify a Technical Agency which can assist in matters requiring technical inputs. Each State has also formed a Communication & Capacity Development Unit whose work is human resource development for all stakeholders also. Training has been imparted on diverse subjects like Workshop on Swajaldhara, Community participation, Water quality monitoring and surveillance, Operation and maintenance, Sustainability of Water sources, Capacity building for Anganwadi workers etc.

[Department of Drinking Water Supply (Ministry of Rural Development) O.M. No. Z-11014/4/2008-GC dated 22nd August, 2008]

Comments of the Committee

(Please *see* Paragraph No. 22 of Chapter I of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No. 4.17)

Another problem faced by the States in management of water supply schemes relate to O&M costs. As per the current norms, 15 percent of ARWSP funds are to be spent by the State Governments for O&M purposes. As pointed out by the Department, large schemes are commissioned for water supply which later suffer due to the problems in O&M. The Committee would like the Department to keep

vigil relating to the feasibility and sustainability of water supply schemes. However, since most of the O&M activities are being undertaken by PRIs who do not have the capacity for the same, the Union Government should provide all technical guidance to the States for the same. The Department may also engage the expertise of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj and insist upon them to work towards capacity building of Panchayats, which is crucial for the maintenance of water supply schemes in rural areas. Besides, monitoring of O&M activities by the State, through some institutional mechanism should also be undertaken. The Committee hold that the Department of Drinking Water Supply being nodal Department must ensure that States do not face difficulties in implementation of water supply schemes. The Centre should not shy away from their responsibility by stating that water is a State subject as providing access to safe drinking water to rural masses is the mandate of the Department of Drinking Water Supply. The Committee, therefore, emphasize that the Union Government should provide all kinds of backing through aid, technology transfer, capacity building and partnership with the States through both formal and informal methods, and pursue with them to treat the issue as a foremost developmental agenda. The Committee may be apprised of the desired action taken for coordination with the States with regard to all the issues discussed above.

Reply of the Government

Under Communication and Capacity Development Units (CCDU) all States have been requested to impart extensive training to the Panchayati Raj Members as well as VWSC—members on operation and maintenance of the water supply schemes. The State Governments are advised to consult and choose the technology options before finalising the water supply schemes for particular village/habitations.

[Department of Drinking Water Supply (Ministry of Rural Development) O.M. No. Z-11014/4/2008-GC dated 22nd August, 2008]

Comments of the Committee

(Please *see* Paragraph No. 25 of Chapter I of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No. 4.21)

The Department had initiated reforms programme and the Swajaldhara Scheme to institutionalize community participation in the drinking water supply sector. However, there were serious problems identified in the implementation of Swajaldhara, which were regularly highlighted by the Committee in their respective Reports. These problems related to inadequate planning and homework before launching the Scheme, lack of motivation among States/Districts to comeforth with projects, lack of demand among communities, problems regarding 10 per cent community contribution etc. Pursuant to the strong recommendations of the Committee in their previous Reports, the Department considered and reviewed the Scheme and decided that from the Eleventh Plan, there will be only one Scheme *viz.* ARWSP which will have an element of community participation but may not insist on community contribution. The Scheme will involve signing Memorandum of Understanding with the States which will entail capacity building programmes for PRIs, empowerment of PRIs to levy user charges for O&M etc. Besides, the new guidelines stipulate that it is upto the States to have community contribution from the 50 per cent funds provided by them, the quantum of which is to be decided by the State. In view of the above discussed scenario, the Committee would like the Department to first and foremost ensure that the ongoing projects under Swajaldhara are completed and are not neglected as the Scheme is sought to be discontinued. The Committee, therefore, strongly recommend that every effort should be taken by the Department to give emphasis on pending/incomplete projects under Swajaldhara in consultation with the State Governments. The Committee feel that in view of the poor financial and physical performance of the Scheme earlier, it becomes imperative for the Department to monitor the ongoing projects of Swajaldhara and ensure their timely achievement. The Department must provide additional funds, if required to incomplete/pending projects under Swajaldhara. The Committee would like to be apprised of the latest position State-wise of projects undertaken and completed under the Swajaldhara Scheme.

Reply of the Government

The number of Schemes completed up to March, 2009 under Swajaldhara is as follows:—

State	Approved	Completed
Andhra Pradesh	3131	2812
Arunachal Pradesh	72	54
Assam	3765	3735
Bihar	4	0
Chhattisgarh	304	278
Gujarat	1426	864
Haryana	113	13
Himachal Pradesh	1865	1204
Jammu and Kashmir	75	25
Jharkhand	339	208
Karnataka	1007	735
Kerala	360	316
Madhya Pradesh	1488	1037
Maharashtra	1590	1265
Mizoram	14	12
Orissa	1432	1200
Punjab	63	34
Rajasthan	1603	699
Tamil Nadu	1623	1622
Tripura	793	497
Uttar Pradesh	1361	542
Uttarakhand	204	187
West Bengal	104	42

In so far as the incomplete schemes are concerned, the States can utilize funds for completing the same from the funds allocated under National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP) for the year 2009-10 *w.e.f.* 1.4.2009 and onwards.

[Department of Drinking Water Supply (Ministry of Rural Development) O.M. No. Z-11014/4/2008-GC dated 22nd August, 2008]

Comments of the Committee

(Please *see* Paragraph No. 28 of Chapter I of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No. 5.26)

Another very important issue which surfaced during examination of the subject related to conjunctive use of water. The Secretary during evidence stated that they are encouraging States and PRIs to revive traditional sources. The Committee would like to suggest to the Department to convince the Planning Commission to provide more funds to the States for the purpose. Further, as communicated by the Department, some mechanism may be evolved for providing incentives to the villages, for taking up sustainability measures. The Committee would like to suggest to the Department that incentive mechanism on the lines of NGP for rewarding villages, which are promoting sanitation practices must be evolved for water conservation, management, rainwater harvesting, revival of traditional sources and other sustainability measures. In this regard, related schemes of other Departments/Ministries must be coordinated and consultations with all Ministries held so that the modalities and components of the incentive mechanism are expeditiously evolved. The Committee feel that such practical policy initiatives would help achieve sustained progress in the field of providing drinking water. The Department should update the Committee on the efforts undertaken by them on all the aforesaid aspects.

Reply of the Government

After due deliberations with all concerned Ministries including the Planning Commission and approval of the Cabinet, the funds for sustainability of drinking water sources have been increased from 5%

(on 75:25 Centre to State share) to 20% on 100% GOI assistance. Therefore, the Central fund provided to the States building in sustainability component has been substantially increased.

[Department of Drinking Water Supply (Ministry of Rural Development) O.M. No. Z-11014/4/2008-GC dated 22nd August, 2008]

Comments of the Committee

(Please *see* Paragraph No. 34 of Chapter I of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No. 6.15)

The National Rural Drinking Water Quality Management and Surveillance Programme launched in 2006 aimed at testing of all drinking water sources by grass-root level workers in each Panchayat by simple-to-use field test kits. So far, 1.96 lakh such workers have been trained out of 11.66 lakh who need to be trained for water quality monitoring and surveillance activities. The Committee, during examination of previous Demands for Grants, have been informed about the deadline which have been extended thrice as States could not complete the training within the time period. The Department further informed that the training is coupled with supply of kits to Gram Panchayats and for large number of States such as Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Jharkhand, Jammu and Kashmir, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tripura, Uttarakhand and all UTs since Gram Panchayat level training has not been completed, the kits could not be supplied. The Committee on the aforesaid issue would like the Department to seek time-bound commitment from States to complete the training of Gram Panchayats for testing water quality in village Panchayats. The Department on their part should provide all assistance to the States after identifying the bottlenecks faced by them. The Committee would like to suggest that through PRIs, the community has to be made conscious of water quality and the testing kits should be made available to other institutions also such as schools, colleges and qualified NGOs etc. in the area. Further, through these institutions, low cost technologies for water treatment at household

habitation level may be marketed with the aid of district level authorities. The Committee maintain that a multi-pronged strategy with the involvement of various related ministries is imperative for implementing measures for improvement in water quality and a systematic and holistic approach for linking both quality and quantity aspect of water management must be evolved. The Committee would like the Department to earnestly consider the aforesaid aspects and formulate effective strategies for water management.

Reply of the Government

As per the National Rural Drinking Water Quality Monitoring and Surveillance Programme, about 3.39 lakh people have been trained in the country, as per reports available as on 16/4/2009. States have been requested to complete all training programmes, latest by December, 2009 and also to enter data online into the Integrated Management Information System developed by the Department. Analysis of such data would then, provide opportunity to the Department to provide necessary assistance to the States after identifying the bottlenecks faced by them. Household based and Community based Terracotta filters are being promoted for tackling iron and bacteriological contamination. The technology is very simple and the products could be locally produced by trained NGOs/Women Self Help Groups. Such action has already been initiated in Karnataka and Tripura States. Treatment of Arsenic, Fluoride and Salinity are not advised locally as these treatment plants/filters are difficult to operate and maintain and involve serious reject management problems. Another new programme called "Jalmani" was launched on 14/11/2008 for providing stand alone drinking water purification systems in rural schools in the country for providing pure drinking water to rural school children at the consumption point.

[Department of Drinking Water Supply (Ministry of Rural Development) O.M. No. Z-11014/4/2008-GC dated 22nd August, 2008]

Comments of the Committee

(Please *see* Paragraph No. 37 of Chapter I of the Report)

CHAPTER V

RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH FINAL REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT ARE STILL AWAITED

Recommendation (Para No. 5.19)

The Standing Committee in their earlier Reports had considered the issue of slippages with utmost seriousness and made series of recommendations to arrest the problem of slippages. The Committee in their Reports on Demands for Grants 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 had expressed strong displeasure over the factual position with regard to coverage status as revealed by the Habitation Survey results indicating huge incidences of slippages negating all progress made in the drinking water sector. The Committee, however, appreciated the efforts of the Department made with regard to the online data entry system where States furnish the data online on an annual basis. Such a measure, the Committee feel would substantially help the Department to have a clear picture regarding coverage status. The Department should continue efforts in this regard through regularly imparting training to officials so that the discrepancies and anomalies in the Survey Results are never repeated in future. Further, the Committee would also like the Department to make provision for entry of State-specific reasons for slippages so that timely corrective measures may be taken through technical and financial support from the Centre. Besides, strict monitoring and verification of the data is imperative for more transparency and reliability. The Committee may be apprised of the performance of the online system and suggestions, if any, for improvement of the software, as already pointed out in the earlier part of the Report.

Reply of the Government

Provision for entering state specific reasons for slippage is being developed in the online system. The online system has been accepted

by all States and their suggestions have also been incorporated. The software is now being modified to capture the Census population that has been covered with drinking water supply schemes.

[Department of Drinking Water Supply (Ministry of Rural Development) O.M. No.Z-11014/4/2008-GC dated 22nd August, 2008]

Comments of the Committee

(Please *see* Paragraph No. 31 of Chapter I of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No. 6.14)

Besides, contaminants like nitrate and iron are mostly related to the industrial wastes which are indiscriminately released into the ground. The Committee would like to reiterate the recommendation made in their Report on Demands for Grants (2008-2009) to make pollution of drinking water sources an offence and would like to be informed of the punitive legislative measures for checking water contamination as proposed in the model legislation being worked out by the Ministry.

Reply of the Government

The issue of punitive legislative measures to make pollution of Drinking Water Sources an offence is being examined by the Department at present.

[Department of Drinking Water Supply (Ministry of Rural Development) O.M. No.Z-11014/4/2008-GC dated 22nd August, 2008]

Comments of the Committee

(Please *see* Paragraph No. 3 of Chapter I of the Report)

NEW DELHI;
16 *December*, 2009
25 *Agrahayana*, 1931 *(Saka)*

SUMITRA MAHAJAN,
Chairperson,
Standing Committee on
Rural Development.

APPENDIX I

COMMITTEE ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT (2009-2010)

EXTRACTS OF THE MINUTES OF THE SEVENTH SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY, THE 14 DECEMBER, 2009

The Committee sat from 1500 hrs. to 1630 hrs. in Committee Room 'A', Ground Floor, Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi

PRESENT

Shrimati Sumitra Mahajan — *Chairperson*

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Pulin Bihari Baske
3. Shri Kunvarjibhai Mohanbhai Bavalia
4. Shri Sanjay Dhotre
5. Shri Gobinda Chandra Naskar
6. Shri Rakesh Pandey
7. Shri P.L. Punia
8. Shri Kodikkunnil Suresh
9. Shrimati Usha Verma

Rajya Sabha

10. Shri Ganga Charan
11. Shri Silvius Condpan
12. Shrimati Maya Singh

SECRETARIAT

1.	Shri P.K. Grover	—	*Joint Secretary*
2.	Shri V.R. Ramesh	—	*Director*
3.	Shri A.K. Shah	—	*Additional Director*
4.	Shri Sundar Prasad Das	—	*Under Secretary*

2. *** *** *** *** ***

3. *** *** *** *** ***

4. The Committee then took up for consideration Memorandum No. 2 regarding draft Action-taken Report on Forty-First Report of the Committee (Fourteenth Lok Sabha) on 'Drinking Water Scenario in rural areas in the country' and adopted the same without any modification.

5. The Committee then authorised the Chairperson to finalise the aforesaid Draft Reports on the basis of factual verification from the concerned Ministry/Department and present the same to both the Houses of Parliament.

The Committee then adjourned.

***Relevant portions of the minutes not related to the subject have been kept separately.

APPENDIX II

ANALYSIS OF THE ACTION TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE FORTY-FIRST REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT (14TH LOK SABHA)

(i)	Total number of Recommendations	33
(ii)	Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government: Para Nos.: 2.10, 2.11, 2.12, 2.20, 2.21, 2.27, 2.29, 3.13, 3.14, 3.16, 4.14, 4.16, 4.22, 4.23, 5.20, 5.21, 5.23, 5.24, 5.25, 5.29, 6.11, 6.12 and 6.13.	23
	Percentage to the total recommendations	69.70
(iii)	Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of Government's replies: Nil	Nil
	Percentage to the total recommendations	
(iv)	Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee: Para Nos.: 2.13, 2.28, 3.15, 4.15, 4.17, 4.21, 5.26 and 6.15	8
	Percentage to the total recommendations	24.24
(v)	Recommendations in respect of which final replies of the Government are still awaited:	2
	Para Nos.: 5.19 and 6.14	
	Percentage to the total recommendations	6.06